

## REMARKS

In the Office Action dated January 27, 2006, claims 1,3,4,6,8 and 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Landi et al.

Landi et al. is directed to flexible resilient panels that are completely different from the rigid and strong sandwich panels of the present invention. Landi et al. specifically requires that both the honeycomb core and skins must be made from thermoplastic elastomeric material that provides resilient shock absorption (Col. 3, lines 24-51). Landi et al. teach that their shock absorption panels are sufficiently flexible to allow expansion and contraction of the panel by either adding gas or venting gas from the core. Landi et al. teach that their flexible shock absorbing panels are specifically intended for use in situations where a flexible resilient shock absorbing padding is required (Col. 6, lines 8-25).

Applicant's sandwich panels are substantially different from Landi et al. in that they are intended for use in situations where a strong, rigid and lightweight panel is required. The only reference to such sandwich panels in Landi et al. is in the BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION at Col. 1, lines 23- 29. Landi et al. describes such panels as being made from rigid materials that provide strong and lightweight panels that are not suitable for the shock absorbing uses contemplated by Lande et al.

Applicant amends the claims to more particularly point out the present invention and distinguish it from Landi et al. Specifically, the honeycomb core is required to be a "sandwich panel" core which inherently requires that the core be made from rigid, strong and lightweight material that is completely different from Landi et al.'s flexible elastomeric material. Support for this limitation is found in Paragraph 21 of applicant's specification. In addition, the claims have been amended to require that the skins be "composite" skins, which are also an essential part of a sandwich panel, but not suitable for flexible shock absorbing panels of the type taught

by Landi et al. (See Paragraph 22 of applicant's specification for support for this amendment).

Landi et al. neither teaches nor suggests applicant's invention which, as now claimed, is directed to sandwich panels that have a rigid sandwich panel honeycomb core that is surrounded and bonded to an impermeable barrier that is in turn bonded to sandwich panel composite skins. Instead, Landi et al. teaches an elastomeric honeycomb core that is bonded to elastomeric skins to provide a shock absorbing bladder that can be placed between various objects to provide a flexible cushion or padding (See Landi et al. at Col. 5, lines 46-51 and Col. 6, lines 16-25).

As pointed out in Paragraph 1 of applicant's specification, "sandwich panels" are light weight and structurally strong panels. Sandwich panels are used in situations where their strength, rigidity and light weight are required. As pointed out by Landi et al. in their BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION, this is substantially different from shock absorbing panels that must have cores and skins that are sufficiently flexible and resilient to be compressed and expanded without permanent deformation. Use of a composite sandwich panel skin of the type claimed by applicant to provide a rigid structure would be contrary to Landi et al.'s teaching that the structure must remain flexible to absorb shock. Accordingly, it would not be obvious to one of ordinary skill to bond a rigid sandwich panel composite skin of the type claimed by applicant over Landi et al.'s elastomeric core and impermeable barrier because it would defeat the shock absorbing characteristics of Landi et al.'s elastomeric structure.

Applicant submits that the claims, as amended, particularly point out that Landi et al. is non-analogous art, which is directed to resilient shock absorbing bladders that are made from elastomeric materials and not sandwich panels in accordance with the present invention, which are structural panels that must be rigid and structurally strong.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, applicant respectfully requests that this application be reconsidered and allowed. The amendments are appropriately made after final rejection because they do not raised any new issues that would

require a further search. Instead, they place the claims in a better condition for allowance by particularly pointing out differences between Landi et al. and applicant's invention.

Respectfully submitted,

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